THE PHANTOM
GHOST WHO WALKS
#12
MOONSTONE
$3.99
cover C
Mike Bullock
Silvestre Szilagyi

THE PHANTOM™

GHOST WHO WALKS

created by LEE FALK

For those who came in late...

NEARLY 500 YEARS AGO ON A REMOTE BANGALLAN BEACH, ONLY ONE SURVIVED A VICIOUS PIRATE ATTACK.
THE FIRST PHANTOM SWORE A SACRED OATH ON THE SKULL OF HIS FATHER'S KILLER.
...WILL DEVOTE MY LIFE TO THE DESTRUCTION OF PIRACY, GREED, CRUELTY AND INJUSTICE!
GENERATION AFTER GENERATION FOLLOWED, BUT TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD, HE WAS ALWAYS ONE MAN... IMMORTAL.
NOW THE 21ST PHANTOM HAUNTS THE NIGHTMARES OF EVIL MEN EVERYWHERE.

"GODFALL" part five

WRITTEN BY **MIKE BULLOCK**
ART BY **SILVESTRE SZILAGYI**
COLORED BY **JASON JENSEN**
LETTERED BY **JOSH AITKEN**
PHANTOM GROUP EDITOR **MIKE BULLOCK**

COVER A BY ART THIBERT · COVER B BY FERNANDO PENICHE
COVER C BY ROBERTO CASTRO

SPECIAL THANKS TO
OUR PHANTOM CONSULTANT
ED RHOADES

AND TO *KAREN MOY*
AT KING FEATURES

MOONSTONE is...

Joe Gentile - editor in chief
Dave Ulanski - art director
Lori G - editorial
Rory Bautista, Tim Gans, Jez Layman & Mike Reynolds - ground control
Kathleen O'Brien - web master
Richard Dean Starr - Special Projects Coordinator
Tim Lasiuta - Research & Development
Joe Gentile & Dave Ulanski - publishers
visit us on the web at www.moonstonebooks.com

The Phantom: Ghost Who Walks #12 © 2010 King Features Syndicate, Inc. The Phantom is a trademark of Hearst Holdings, Inc. All rights reserved. Published by Moonstone, 582 Torrence Avenue, Calumet City, IL 60409 With the exception of review purposes, this book may not be reprinted in part or in whole without the express written consent of King Features and Moonstone.
Printed in Canada

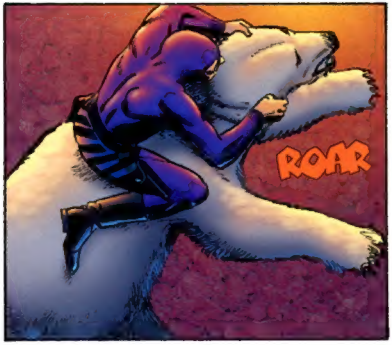
DEEP IN THE BOWELS OF HIM'S CASTLE...
DEATH!
DEATH!
DEATH!
DEATH!
DEATH!
DEATH!

DEATH!
DEATH!
DEATH!
NO!
BRAP
PAP
PAP
PAP
DEATH!
DEATH!
DEATH!
ROAR
DEATH!
DEATH!
DEATH!
DEATH!

BRAP
PAP
PAP
DEATH!
DEATH!
DEATH!
DEATH!
DEATH!
DEATH!
DEATH!
RAAAA
DEATH!
DEATH!
ROAR
DEATH!
YEEEAAAAA!
RAAAR
CREASH

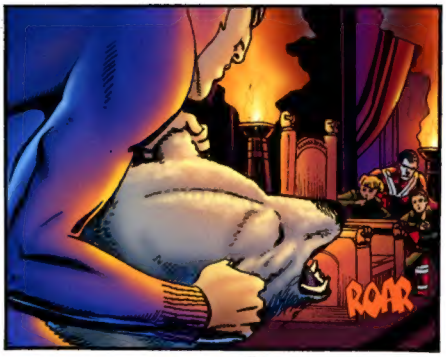
SHOOT THEM! KILL THE IMPOSTER!

RUN!
GET OUT OF MY WAY!
RAAAAA


ROAR

YOU COME WITH ME!

RAAAR


ROAR

NO!
AIII!
RUN!

RAAAR

MOVE, MY CHILDREN!

SMASH

NO-

ROAR

RAAAR
ROAR
DISAPPEARED- LIKE A GHOST -
OR...
A MAGICIAN.
MANDRAKE WOULD BE PROUD.
HERE GOES NOTHING.

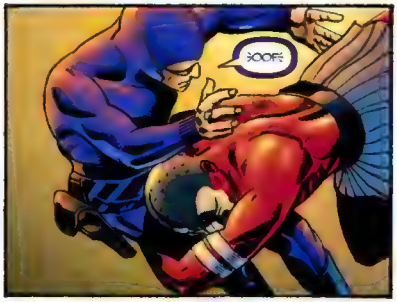
SHHWW

KUH-RACK
WHAP
SCHNAK
I'LL-
WHAK
GLUK
WHAM

KIT! HELOISE!
NO!
DO NOT MOVE, PHANTOM IF YOU TAKE ONE MORE STEP, I WILL SAY THE WORD AND THESE TWO CHILDREN WILL DIE MURDERED BY THEIR OWN HANDS
I ADMIT, IT WAS A GAMBLE, USING THESE WHELPS AS THE KEYSTONE OF MY PLAN.
LRA SPIES TOLD ME OF YOUR INVOLVEMENT WITH PALMER-WALKER - PERHAPS IT IS MERE COINCIDENCE THE TWO OF YOU OFTEN CROSS PATHS-
PERHAPS NOT HOWEVER, SINCE YOU SEEM TO PROTECT HER-
AND HER CHILDREN-
I WAGERED MAKING YOU WITNESS THE DEATHS OF THESE BRATS WOULD BE THE PERFECT REVENGE
NOW, DROP YOUR GUNS OR I WILL HAVE THEM SHOOT

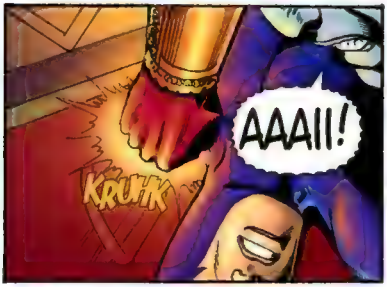
I DIDN'T KNOW "GODS" PLACED BETS. I THOUGHT YOU KNEW ALL-
BUT, IF YOU DID, YOU'D ALSO KNOW IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO THESE CHILDREN-
THERE'LL BE NO PLACE YOU CAN HIDE- IN THIS LIFE OR THE NEXT.
BE WARY OF THE ANGRY PHANTOM FOR HE MOVES LIKE LIGHTNING AND THE EARTH TREMBLES WITH HIS MIGHT -OLD JUNGLE SAYING
YOU ARE IN NO POSITION TO MAKE THREATS-
BLF
BLAM

KRAKK
KRAKK
NOOO!!
BLAM
RAAAA!


OOF!

WHACK

NOW— I TIRE OF TOYING WITH YOU, PHANTOM

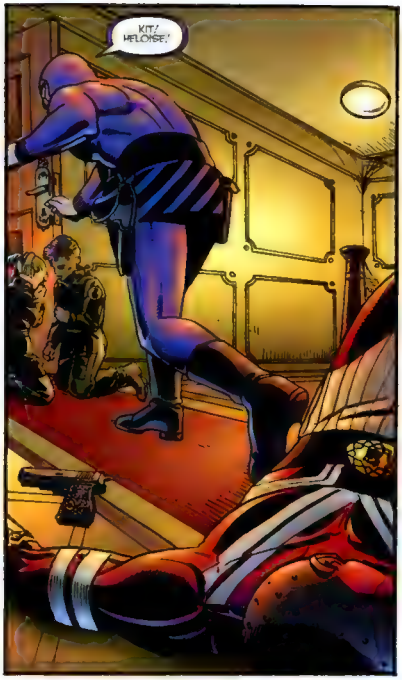

AAAII!
KRUHK

SURK!

WHUMP

YOU CANNOT BEST ME IN SINGLE COMBAT, PHANTOM. I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN YOUR SUPERIOR IN EVERY WAY.

FOR A GOD, YOU SURE ARE WRONG A LOT!
KRUNK
KLANG
SHWINK
"BEST" THIS!
WHAK
WHUMP


KIT!
HELOISE!

IT'S GOING TO BE ALRIGHT I'M HERE NOW. IT'S OKAY
I-I-I WANNA GO H-HOME-
:SNIFFLE:

THAT SOUNDS LIKE A GOOD IDEA

WHAT IS IT-

TIME FOR YOU-

TO DIE!

KRUCH!
SMASH!
ROOAAR
KIDS!
ROOAAA
BLAM

ROOHAR
GRRRR

ROO
AAAA
ARRR
KWIRRSSSH
RAARRAAA

KIT, TAKE YOUR SISTER AND FIND A PLACE TO HIDE

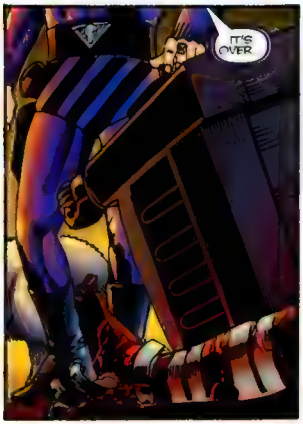
RAARRAAA

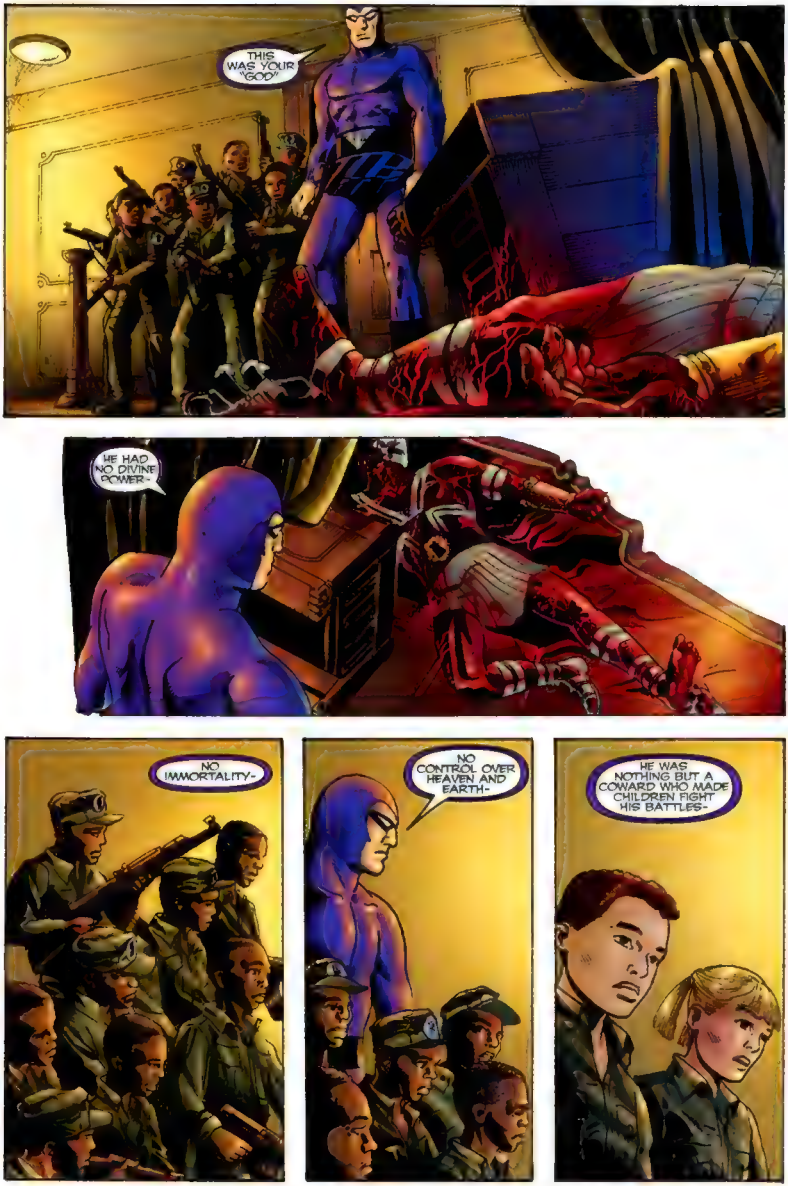
RAARRAARRA

CALM DOWN, MY FRIEND. IT'S OVER. YOU'RE SAFE NOW.

GRRRRR

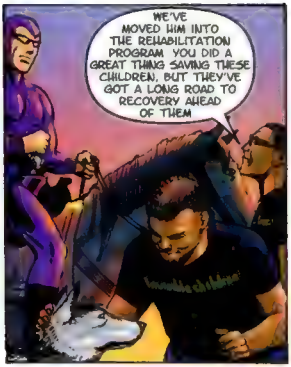
CLIK


IT'S OVER


THIS WAS YOUR "GOD"
HE HAD NO DIVINE POWER-
NO IMMORTALITY-
NO CONTROL OVER HEAVEN AND EARTH-
HE WAS NOTHING BUT A COWARD WHO MADE CHILDREN FIGHT HIS BATTLES-

AN EVIL MAN, WHO WILL NOW ANSWER FOR HIS CRIMES
:SOB:
:SOB:
THE NIGHTMARE IS OVER.
JP
FINALLY. OVER.
T-THIS ISN'T OVER PHANTOM I-
LET'S GO HOME

Epilogue
AND WHAT OF EBUN?

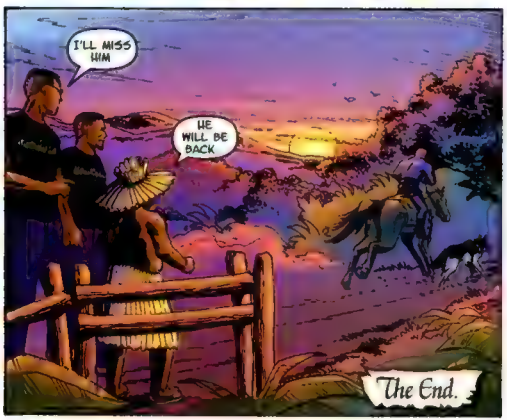

WE'VE MOVED HIM INTO THE REHABILITATION PROGRAM. YOU DID A GREAT THING SAVING THESE CHILDREN, BUT THEY'VE GOT A LONG ROAD TO RECOVERY AHEAD OF THEM

WE'LL SEE WHAT WE CAN DO ON OUR END TO MAKE SURE NO ONE FILLS THE VOID HIM'S DEATH CREATED.
GURAN, DID THE MEDICINE WE PURCHASED IN MAWITAAN MAKE IT HERE YET?

YES, PHANTOM. DR AXEL IS ON HIS WAY AS WELL. THE CHILDREN WILL BE IN GOOD HANDS.

BOOM
BOOM
BOOM BOOM BOOM

YOU'LL HAVE TO EXCUSE ME, AARON. JAMES. IT SEEMS THE WORK OF PHANTOM IS NEVER ENDING.

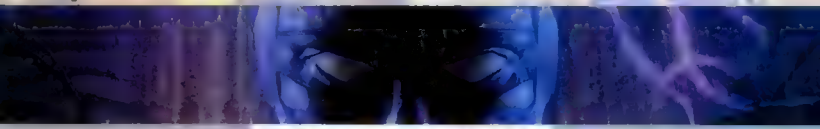

I'LL MISS HIM
HE WILL BE BACK
The End.

BEHIND THE MASK

By Ed Rhoades
Looking Back

Sitting on my father's lap each day as he read the Phantom newspaper strip to me is one of my earliest memories. Growing up, I never missed a single day of Lee Falk's adventures, but there were no comic shops then and our local newspaper store didn't carry Phantom comics. I never even realized they existed until I came across Harvey Hits 48 and Gold Key # 2. (I still have that ragged Harvey Hits from my childhood.) My grandmother had a stack of Big Little Books and one of them was The Phantom. From that, I assumed the only Phantom publications in existence were reprints of Lee Falk's newspaper stories. I never thought to save those newspaper strips, but I did cut out some color tear sheets from Lee's origin story where the Phantom is hounded by newspapers after defeating the heavyweight boxing champ.

It was many years later, after my father was gone, that I peered into the window of a comic shop and saw Pioneer Sundays reprints of Phantom strips. I set out to gather these compilations, and it took me four years to find them all. During that time, I visited comic shops and comic shows everywhere I could and learned that there were Phantom comics with original stories. This was the early '90's, so there was no Ebay and Internet was in its infancy. In fact, I recall getting a Linux based account (no graphics) where corresponded with other Phantom fans resulting in a visit from a Phantom enthusiast from Norway.



Eventually, I gathered all the US Phantom publications with the exception of some rare issues like Future Comics and Ace comics which only featured very small segments of newspaper stories. A mutual Phantom enthusiast told me about the new Frew Blockbuster which was the first Phantom annual and managed to obtain one. It is one of my most treasured books and has been signed by Lee Falk, Jim Shepherd, George Olesen, Andre LeBlanc, and Sy Barry. Through searching and trading, my collection grew to thousands of Phantom comics mostly from other countries including Australia, New Zealand, Italy, Sweden, Argentina, Buenos Aires, England, Thailand, Turkey, Yugoslavia, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Brazil, India, Russia and Germany. I especially liked the ones printed in English.

The US Phantom comics began with reprints from newspaper stories but also included some original adventures including some reprints of older Italian comics used. I was disappointed that the entire US output of Phantom comics was small compared to that of Australia, Scandinavia and Italy. I liked the modern DC Phantom comics and the short run of Marvel Phantom comics and the Pioneer and Pacific Club comics, but along with other Phantom collectors, I was delighted that Moonstone would be publishing Phantom material. Frankly, I didn't expect them to last no US Phantom comics did. I wondered if the sensibilities of US comics fans were just less likely to embrace a less sensational hero one without super powers or sex and violence. However, Moonstone persisted and broke new ground with graphic novels, and experiments like computerized images, chronicles, prose collections, Sunday reprints and a steady offering of solid Phantom comics. Unlike the usual US comics, readers didn't have to buy dozens of comics just to get one complete story. We finally had our own Phantom comics to be proud of, and the body of work easily eclipsed the longest running Charlton series. They maintained Lee's conventions while slightly modernizing the style to fit US audiences. The stories and art grew stronger and stronger and they even featured lots of painted covers reminiscent of the classic painted Phantom covers by the late George Wilson and Don Newton. I expect these comics to be sought after by Phantom fans in years to come. Perhaps some will find their way to be reprinted in European Phantom publications.

I can see a day when paper products become a thing of the past even newspapers and magazine will make way for digital publishing. When that time arrives, from Big Little Books to Moonstone Phantom comics, the demand for printed Phantom adventures will make these publications priceless to collectors of The Ghost Who Walks. On behalf of US Phantom fans, I thank Moonstone for their impressive contribution to our favorite comic hero.

Long live the Phantom.

BEHIND THE MASK

By Ed Rhoades

Farewell to Moonstone's Phantom: An interview with Mike Bullock

When Mike Bullock became the writer for Moonstone's Phantom, I wasn't sure what to expect, but I hoped for the best, and got more than I'd expected. I would have been happy just to have someone respectful of the heritage of Lee Falk's work with the character, but I got much more. Mike and I spoke at length in phone conversations and exchanged enormous numbers of emails and to my surprise and delight, Mike emerged as someone who had a realistic modern approach to Phantom fiction while being a champion of Lee's character. Rather than being someone intent on 'reimagining' The Phantom, Mike was adamant about retaining the conventions that made The Phantom special: the Phantom is humane, he does not kill...ever, he is human subject to frailty, anger, and disappointments, but despite the difficulty around him, he remains a moral, wholesome role model. Mike not only embraced these ideals in his own work, he demanded them in every Phantom project in which he was involved. He constantly studied The Phantom, reading and referring to the huge body of Lee's work, and there were times he kept me busy answering questions about the stories. Lee's own work evolved with the times and if Lee could see them, I sincerely believe he would have appreciated Mike's stories and admired Mike's talent as I do.

As Moonstone concludes the longest run of US Phantom comics, I am presenting the readers with an interview with Mike. It is my hope that one day he has a chance to write more Phantom stories.

Ed Rhoades - How did your involvement with Moonstone's Phantom begin?

Mike Bullock: If memory serves, I picked up some of Moonstone's books at my local comic shop and really liked them. Particularly Joe Gentile's Mysterious Traveler and their anti-hero book Silencers. I reached out to Joe through the comics' website Broken Frontier and not long after he and I became friends. When Moonstone launched their Phantom line, I was very excited and really wanted to get a shot at writing it. Luckily, the opportunity presented itself a year or so later and I never looked back.

ED - What appealed to you about the character?

MB: The Phantom is a real hero. He's not angst ridden, selfish or driven by some murky agenda. He knows the difference between right and wrong, knows that sometimes the right choice is the hard choice and he makes it anyway. I think our world needs more real heroes these days and the Phantom is one of them.

ED - What preconceptions regarding The Phantom did you have?

MB: I was unaware that he didn't kill at first. Most likely, since so many US "heroes" think nothing of using lethal force, I just assumed that since Phantom had two guns, he did the same. Once I really came to fully understand the nature of the Phantom as more than just a casual reader, I realized having him kill or maim would be out of character and completely unrealistic.

ED - What was your exposure to The Phantom?

MB: When I was a kid, my whole family would end up in the living room after Sunday breakfast, pouring over the newspaper. My parents would read the local and world news, my brother would devour the sports section, and I was all about the entertainment section and the comics. I loved reading the Phantom Sunday comic strips. At the time I was an avid comic book reader, but unfortunately, there weren't any Phantom comic books readily available in the US.

ED - What surprises did working on the stories and learning about The Phantom bring to you?

MB: The one thing that jumped out the most was the sheer number of derivative stories that appeared in other "mainstream" US comic books. I'd read a Phantom story penned in the late 1940s and recall the same basic story from a 1970s Iron Man comic I read as a kid. Then, I'd read one from the 1960s, only to recall the various plot points from another comic book printed in the 1980s. A lot of comic writers have borrowed heavily from Lee Falk's work in the US, but sadly, Mr. Falk gets little or no recognition for his influence on the medium from contemporary comic fans and many creators. It's pretty sad, actually, especially when you see the ongoing battles with the families of Kirby, Schuster and the others who were equally influential.

ED - How did Lee Falk's work inspire or influence you?

MB: I'd say the most influential thing was his ability to tell a story without relying on superficial shock value, excessive violence or overt sexuality. I think there's too much out there, not only in comics, but moreso on TV and in movies that really has no solid story but only enough "plot" to hang million dollar special effects and half naked women on to sell it to the audience. It's a real shame, as I said above, that Mr. Falk doesn't get more recognition for his skill and achievements as a real storyteller.

ED - What do you find special about the character?

MB: From a storytelling standpoint, I love the genius of Phantom being a legacy character. Phantom has existed for over 400 years, which gives a writer such a wide open playground. You don't need to plant him in Manhattan to make a good story; you can put him anywhere on Earth, at any moment in history over the last four centuries and instantly have a compelling environment for the Phantom to do his thing.

ED - What was your goal?

MB: Originally, it was just to write some Phantom comics I could be happy with, but, it soon became a challenge to create more Phantom comics than any other US publisher. I admire what the Australian and European publishers have done with The Phantom, keeping Phantom comics coming out for over fifty years is a great thing. I wish we could have done the same.

ED - Your involvement with Moonstone's Phantom went far beyond writing stories. Would you please detail some of the things you contributed to Moonstone's Phantom?

MB: Well, I plotted the story arcs, scripted the stories, did "traffic control" for the art team, helped Joe Gentile select artists, worked with the pre-press mob to get the books out, helped other writers get to know the character better, created the production schedules each year, read over many submissions from other writers to make sure they weren't just telling a Batman story disguised as a Phantom tale and, in general, anything else I could to keep the book going.

ED - What kind of feedback have you received from fans and critics?

MB: As with anything, it's been a mixed bag. The first issue I did, Phantom #12, was an unmitigated disaster and the worst comic I've ever put my name on, in my opinion. So, I sort of started off in a hole and had to work my way back out. Needless to say, the Phantom Phan community is very passionate about the character, rightfully so, and a lot of them let me know right off the bat that this wasn't like working on properties I created. Once things smoothed out, however, it seems like the responses have become overwhelmingly positive. Granted, you'll never make everyone happy, every time out, but for the most part, it seems readers are pleased with the overall output.

ED - How has it affected your work?

MB: First and foremost, I try to write stories I'd want to read. I put things in that I enjoy. Secondly, I want the readers to enjoy them even more than I do, so I've spent a lot of time on various forums, reading what the Phans have to say and trying to incorporate that into the overall theme of the books. This last arc, Godfall, actually originated after the first Invisible Children story finished, when I read some comments from readers who wanted to see how Phantom would handle direct confrontation with child soldiers. That got me wondering and not long after I had the rough direction for the entire first twelve issues of the Phantom: Ghost Who Walks series, culminating in the final confrontation between Phantom and the warlord HIM.

ED - If you were to continue, what directions would you like to see?

MB: Well, there's no end of real life villains in Africa these days, so the story ideas are nearly evergreen. Beyond that, I had intended to get Phantom involved in some things that were more international in scope, including a visit to Sydney and Washington, DC.

ED - What is your writing background?

MB: I've been writing creatively since I was old enough to hold a pencil. My first published work, however, was journalistic in nature, as I used to do music reviews (concerts, albums, etc) which led to promotional writing, sports writing and eventually, comic book journalism. Thanks to Erik Larsen at Image Comics, that wasn't the end of the line and I was able to finally unleash my first love of creative writing, (and more specifically comic books) on the world.

ED - Please tell us a little about Lions, Tigers and Bears?

MB: LTB is a story about a little boy named Joey whose stuffed animals come to life to protect him from the monsters in his closet, known as the Beasties. As these things go, Joey soon discovers he's the key figure in a war between the stuffed animals and the Beasties.

ED - What would you like to see happen in the future for the Phantom in film, comics and strips?

MB: I'd like to see someone with a pure vision of the property bring it to the big screen in a similar manner to the newer Batman films. Something honest that will show the world how great the character is and prove once and for all he isn't just some campy 1930s pulp character, which seems to be the common misperception in the US. As for comics, I just hope the new creative teams care about the character more than putting a purple feather in their caps. The comic industry has no lack of exceptional talented individuals and hopefully, the best and brightest will find their way to Bangalla.

ED - What other works do you have on the horizon?

MB: Black Bat/Death Angel Doubleshot should be out in September from Moonstone Books. I'm also working on a few other pulp characters for Moonstone including Captain Future: Wizard of Science, Gladiator and Runemaster. After that, my next work in the Captain Action-verse will appear in the form of Captain Action: Blüd Red, introducing a new character bearing the same name. I also have a new all-ages property I'm working on and a brand new book entitled Savage Beauty, which should be of great interest to Phantom Phans as it will continue certain themes I've addressed in newer Phantom comics.

ED - If you have a chance to work with the character again, what capacity would you desire?

MB: I'd like to pick up right where I left off, to be honest. It's been a very rewarding experience, working on a great character, with some really incredible artists like Silvestre Syzilagyi, Fernando Peniche, Doug Klauba, Bob Pedroza, Carlos Magno, Joe Prado, Terry Austin, Marat Mychaels, Brett Blevins, Rick Leonardi and many, many more. I'd like to thank all of them, and most importantly Joe Gentile, as well as everyone else who has helped put the Good Mark on this run. It's been a wonderful experience I'll never forget.

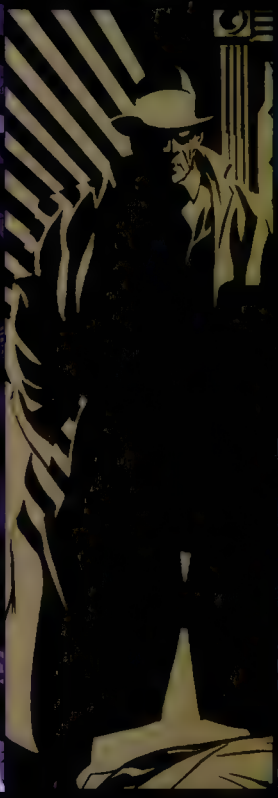
I want to thank Mike for his hard work and dedication not only to his own stories, but for preserving the quality of work throughout Moonstone's impressive tenure with the character. There should be a story in which the Phantom gives Mike a goodmark to illustrate his appreciation for the good he has done in the Phantom's world.

THE ORIGINALS ARE BACK!

THE PHANTOM DETECTIVE

Protecting us from evils that no one believes exist.

SECRET AGENT X



He could be anyone, anywhere. You will never see him coming.

BLACK BAT

Judge, Jury, & Executioner. He is the justice system.

BRAND NEW FEMALE SUPERHERO PROSE STORIES BY:

TRINA ROBBINS, JENNIFER FALLON, ELAINE LEE, CATHY CLAMP, GILLIAN HORVATH, K.G. MCABEE, DEBBIE VIGUIE, BARBARA KESEL, ELIZABETH MASSIE, NANCY HOLDER, KATHE KATTO, VALERIE D'ORAZIO, & MAGGIE THOMPSON.

CHICKS IN CHAPS

ART BY EMILY STONE AND NICOLA SCOTT!

coming soon!

MOONSTONE™

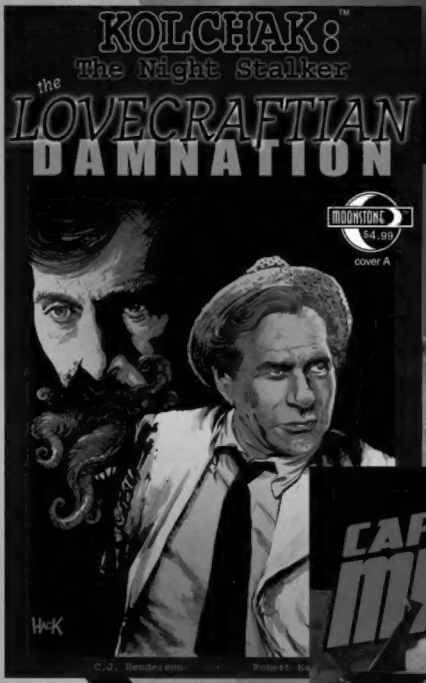
KOLCHAK

THE NIGHT STALKER FILES

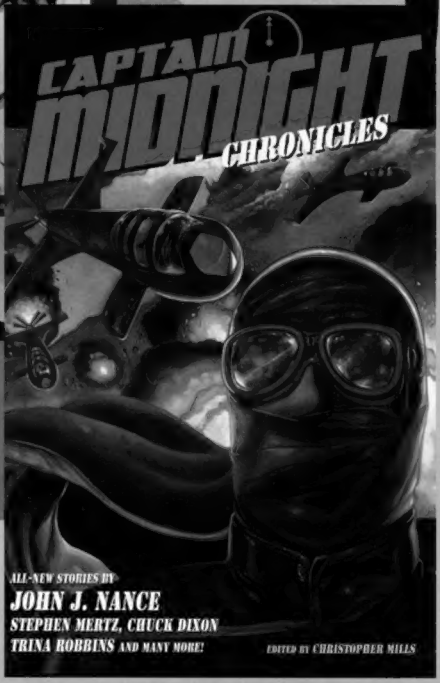
JOIN OUR INTREPID REPORTER OF THE SUPERNATURAL IN HIS ALL NEW ONGOING SERIES!

WRITTEN BY CHRIS MILLS!

moonstonebooks.com



LONG AWAITED SEQUEL TO THE LOVECRAFTIAN HORROR!



grim avenger of the skies--- enemy of spies and saboteurs

THE PHANTOM
KOLCHAK: the Night Stalker
AIRBOY
MOONSTONE MONSTERS
THE SPIDER
BUCKAROO BANZAI
captain ACTION
Domino Lady
WWW.MOONSTONEBOOKS.COM

A GREEN GIANT SCAN